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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/812,802	03/20/2001	Kazuya Kawasaki	JG-TT-5053 / 500568.20026	1201
26418	7590	03/21/2006	EXAMINER	
REED SMITH, LLP ATTN: PATENT RECORDS DEPARTMENT 599 LEXINGTON AVENUE, 29TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10022-7650			ALEXANDER, LYLE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1743	

DATE MAILED: 03/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/812,802

Applicant(s)

KAWASAKI ET AL.

Examiner

Lyle A. Alexander

Art Unit

1743

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _____ MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

A new search was performed and the following new references were found that are more pertinent than Amano et al. '197.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 4-6 and 14-18 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-8 of copending Application No. 10/359,131. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both claim a test device having a reagent coated on a support.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 4-6 and 14-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Facy (USP 3,913,393), Wogoman (USP 4,990,075), Chu (USP 6,703,297) or Yokoi et al. (USP 6,793,885).

Facy teach a chamber(2) having a surface(1) that is cover with an emulsion(4) of an indicator in gelatin. The claimed "water-impermeable frame" has been read on the taught --chamber(2)--, the claimed "surface" has been read on the taught --surface(1)-- and the claimed "swelling polymer layer ... all reagents necessary" on the taught --emulsion(4)--.

Wogoman teach a device for sequential analytical reactions. Device(10) comprises a reaction channel(21) that has been coated with a reagent immobilized by ployacrylamides(see col. 17 lines 3-9). Column 15 line 35+ teach binding analogs that will react with the analytes of interest. The claimed "water-impermeable frame" has been read on the taught --device(10)--, the claimed "surface" has been read on the taught --channel(21)--and the claimed "swelling polymer layer" has been read on the taught --polyacrylamide-- and the claimed "reagents necessary" on the taught --binding analogs--.

Chu teaches a device having a plurality well coated with a reagent and gelatin (see col. 26-27 lines 55-20 respectively). The claimed "water-impermeable frame" has been read on the taught device, the claimed "surface" has been read on the taught well and the claimed "swelling polymer layer ... all reagents necessary" on the taught gelatin layer containing the reagents.

Yokoi et al. teach a test container(1) having a surface(2) where reagent layer(3) is fixed. The claimed "water-impermeable frame" has been read on the taught --container(1)--, the claimed "surface" has been read on the taught --surface(2)--and the claimed "swelling polymer layer ... all reagents necessary" on the taught --layer(3)--.

All of these references are silent to the claimed polymer thickness, the support thickness and the claimed tetragon and hexagon shapes.

The court decided In re Boesch (205 USPQ 215) that optimization of a result effective variable is ordinarily within the skill of the art. A result effective variable is one that has well known and expected results. The selection of a thickness of a layer or the shape of a device are result effective variables as they give well known and expected results.

It would have been advantageous to make the support and the polymer layers as thin as possible to save in the cost of production. It would have been advantageous to use a hexagonal or tetragon shape to gain the advantages of compact shipping (e.g. more device in the shape of hexagon or tetragon could be placed in a box than if the device were circular).

It would have been within the skill of the art to modify Facy (USP 3,913,393), Wogoman (USP 4,990,075), Chu (USP 6,703,297) or Yokoi et al. (USP 6,793,885) and select a support thickness of 50 microns to 1mm, a polymer thickness of 2-100 microns and hexagonal or tetragonal shapes to gain the above advantages and as optimization of a result effective variable.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lyle A. Alexander whose telephone number is 571-272-1254. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on 571-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Lyle A Alexander
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1743
